

Tien Hai

Criteria: A1 & A4i

Province(s): Thai Binh
PA Status: Nature Reserve

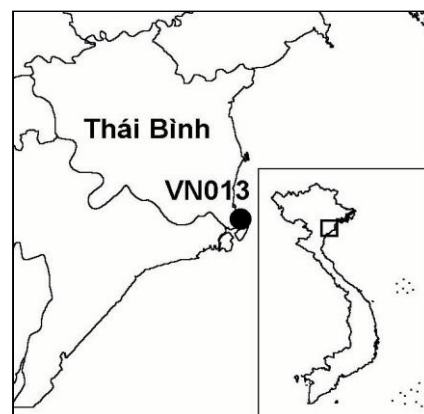
Latitude: 20°18'N
Longitude: 106°36'E
Area: 12,500 ha
Altitude Range: 0-2 m asl

EBA / SA:

None

Priority Landscape:

None



General Description

The IBA comprises Tien Hai Nature Reserve, which is situated in the coastal zone of the Red River Delta, to the north of the mouth of the main channel of the Red River, known as the Ba Lat River. The IBA consists of a stretch of coastline dominated by aquacultural ponds, a large area of intertidal mudflats and two large, sandy islands. Both islands have been extensively afforested with the exotic *Casuarina equisetifolia*. Along the landward shore of the larger island, Con Vanh, is a large area of mangrove, most of which has been enclosed within aquacultural ponds^{1,2}.

Bird Fauna: Key Features

Tien Hai is an important staging and wintering site for migratory waterbirds. However, despite its location at the mouth of the main channel of the Red River, the importance of the site for migratory waterbirds is much lower than that of nearby Xuan Thuy IBA. The reasons for this are not clear, although they may include differences in patterns of sediment deposition as a result of prevailing currents, and levels of human impact between the two sites. Tien Hai is a known wintering site of one globally threatened species: Black-faced Spoonbill *Platalea minor*^{1,2}. The lack of records of other globally threatened bird species from the site may partly reflect low survey coverage.

Species	IBA Criteria	Global Threat Status	Other IBAs	Notes
Black-faced Spoonbill <i>Platalea minor</i>	A1, A4i	EN	8	A group of six birds was observed feeding along the bank of the Ba Lat River in 1996 ¹ .

Biome Restricted Species: The site does not qualify under criterion A3. See Appendix 4 for details.

Secondary Criteria

The site does not qualify under any secondary criterion.

Threats to Biodiversity

The biggest potential threat to biodiversity at the site is habitat loss, as a result of afforestation of sandy islands with *Casuarina equisetifolia* and intertidal mudflats with mangrove, which threatens the key habitats for migratory waterbird species. Other major threats are disturbance to birds and hunting. While the precise level of these threats is not known, during a 1996 survey, over 900 people were observed collecting shellfish in the intertidal zone, and hunters were observed carrying guns.

Threat	Severity
Afforestation	• • •
Aquaculture / fisheries	• •
Disturbance to birds	• •
Hunting	• •

Conservation Actions

- The establishment of a nature reserve at Tien Hai was decreed by the government of Vietnam in September 1994².

- In January 1995, a decision was issued by the Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology to expand the Ramsar site at Xuan Thuy to include Con Vanh and Con Thu islands within Tien Hai IBA. Currently however, these are still managed separately, as part of Tien Hai Nature Reserve.

Recommendations

- Tien Hai meets the criteria for designation as a site of international importance for wetland conservation under the Ramsar Convention, and should, therefore, be designated as a Ramsar site.
- An appropriate land-use plan should be prepared for the site, which reduces human pressure on the most critical areas for biodiversity, and clearly defines the boundary of the nature reserve¹.
- Nature reserve management regulations prohibiting hunting should be strictly enforced.
- There should be no further afforestation of sandy islands with *Casuarina equisetifolia* or intertidal mudflats with mangrove¹.
- The capacity of the nature reserve should be increased, in terms of staff, infrastructure and training¹.

References

1. Pedersen, A. and Nguyen Huy Thang (1996) *The conservation of key coastal wetland sites in the Red River Delta*. Hanoi: BirdLife International Vietnam Programme.
2. Birdlife International and the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute (2001) *Sourcebook of existing and proposed protected areas in Vietnam*. Hanoi: BirdLife International Vietnam Programme and the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute.

Thai Thuy

Criteria: A1 & A4i

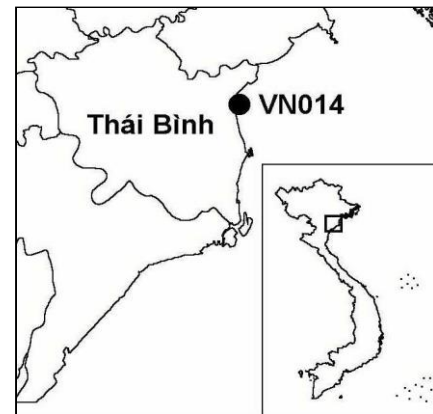
Province(s): Thai Binh
PA Status: None
Latitude: 20°33'N
Longitude: 106°38'E
Area: 13,696 ha
Altitude Range: 0-2 m asl

EBA / SA:

None

Priority Landscape:

None



General Description

The IBA comprises Thai Thuy proposed nature reserve in the coastal zone of the Red River Delta. Thai Thuy IBA includes a 16 km stretch of coastline, bordered by the Thai Binh river to the north and the Tra Ly river to the south. Near the mouths of the Thai Binh and Tra Ly rivers are the largest remaining areas of old-growth mangrove in the Red River Delta. To the south of the Thai Binh river mouth are extensive intertidal mudflats, formed by sediment deposition. Large areas of these mudflats have been afforested with mangrove. To the west of the Thai Binh river mouth is an area of saltpans. Finally, the area around the Tra Ly river mouth is dominated by aquacultural ponds^{1,2}. To the north, the site borders Tien Lang IBA.

Bird Fauna: Key Features

Situated at the mouth of the Thai Binh river, where high rates of sediment deposition result in the development of extensive intertidal habitats, Thai Thuy is an important wintering and staging area for migratory waterbirds. Each year, the site supports significant numbers of wintering gulls, shorebirds and waterfowl, including over 1% of the global population of the globally threatened Saunders's Gull *Larus saundersi*. After Xuan Thuy IBA, the site is one of the most important wintering areas for Black-faced Spoonbill *Platalea minor* in the coastal zone of the Red River Delta. In addition, the site supports a small resident population of the globally near-threatened Black-headed Ibis *Threskiornis melanocephalus*.

Species	IBA Criteria	Global Threat Status	Other IBAs	Notes
Black-faced Spoonbill <i>Platalea minor</i>	A1, A4i	EN	8	The species is a regular winter visitor in small numbers, with maximum counts of 23 birds in the winter of 1995/1996, 12 in 1996/1997 and four in 1999/2000 ³ .
Spoon-billed Sandpiper <i>Eurynorhynchus pygmeus</i>	A1	VU	3	A single individual was observed feeding on an exposed mudflat in the Thai Binh estuary in January 2001 ³ .
Saunders's Gull <i>Larus saundersi</i>	A1, A4i	VU	5	The species is a regular winter visitor in significant numbers, with maximum counts of 147 birds in the winter of 1995/1996, 55 in 1996/1997, 75 in 1997/1998, 100 in 1998/1999, 80 in 1999/2000 and four in 2000/2001 ³ .
†Imperial Eagle <i>Aquila heliaca</i>	A1	VU	2	A single individual was observed in February 1996 ³ . It is unlikely that the site regularly supports a significant population.
Chinese Egret <i>Egretta eulophotes</i>	A1	VU	6	A single individual was observed in October 1996 ³ .
†Far Eastern Curlew <i>Numenius madagascariensis</i>	A1	NT	4	The only record of this species from the site is of a single bird observed in October 1998 ³ . The site probably does not regularly support a significant population of this species.
†Black-headed Ibis <i>Threskiornis melanocephalus</i>	A1	NT	8	The site supports a small resident population, which may be declining. The maximum count of this species is 14 birds in April 1996. During visits in 2000 and 2001, only six and four birds were recorded respectively ³ .

Notes: † = not confirmed to regularly occur in significant numbers.

Biome Restricted Species: The site does not qualify under criterion A3. See Appendix 4 for details.

Secondary Criteria

The site does not qualify under any secondary criterion.

Threats to Biodiversity

One of the biggest threats to biodiversity at Thai Thuy is loss of feeding habitat for migratory waterbirds, as a result of afforestation of intertidal mudflats with mangrove. By 1997, over 2,500 ha had been planted with the mangrove *Kandelia candel*. Hunting is another major threat to biodiversity at the site. During a survey in 1996, the use of mist-nets, airguns and shotguns were all observed. The old-growth mangrove forest is also exploited by local people as a source of wood, and is used for grazing livestock. A further threat is pollution in the form of agricultural run-off and outflow from two industrial processing enterprises, which is allowed to flow into the rivers unchecked^{1,2}.

Threat	Severity
Afforestation	• • •
Aquaculture / fisheries	• •
Disturbance to birds	• •
Hunting	• •
Selective logging / cutting	•
Other	•

Conservation Actions

- The coastal zone of Thai Thuy district was the focus of a project implemented by the Danish Red Cross and the Vietnamese Red Cross, the objectives of which were mangrove afforestation and protection of existing areas of mangrove². However, this project may have resulted in a net loss of natural habitat at the IBA.

Recommendations

- Thai Thuy meets the criteria for designation as a site of international importance for wetland conservation under the Ramsar Convention, and should, therefore, be designated as a Ramsar site.
- Further afforestation of intertidal mudflats and expansion of aquaculture should be prohibited at the site.
- Effective measures to control hunting and exploitation of old-growth mangrove at the site should be introduced.
- Thai Thuy should be decreed as a nature reserve by the government of Vietnam, and a management board should be established under the management of Thai Binh province.

References

1. Pedersen, A. and Nguyen Huy Thang (1996) *The conservation of key coastal wetland sites in the Red River Delta*. Hanoi: BirdLife International Vietnam Programme.
2. BirdLife International and the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute (2001) *Sourcebook of existing and proposed protected areas in Vietnam*. Hanoi, Vietnam: BirdLife International Vietnam Programme and the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute.
3. Eames, J. C. and Tordoff, A. W. (in prep.) Recent records and a conservation status review of some threatened and near-threatened bird species in Vietnam.

Tien Lang

Criteria: A1 & A4i

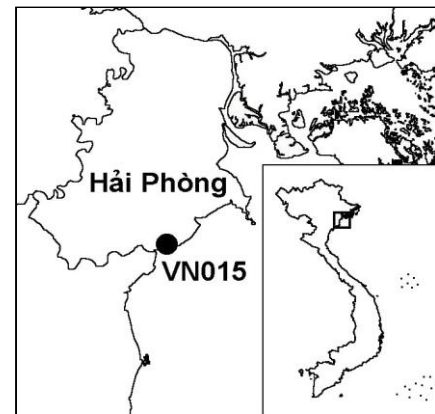
Province(s): Hai Phong
PA Status: None
Latitude: 20°39'N
Longitude: 106°39'E
Area: 5,000 ha
Altitude Range: 0-2 m asl

EBA / SA:

None

Priority Landscape:

None

**General Description**

The IBA is situated in the coastal zone of the Red River Delta, and comprises a 13 km stretch of coastline bordered by the Van Uc estuary to the north and the Thai Binh estuary to the south. Each estuary supports approximately 100 ha of old-growth mangrove forest, almost all of which is enclosed within aquacultural ponds. Each estuary also contains extensive intertidal mudflats, some areas of which have been afforested with mangrove¹. To the south, the site borders Thai Thuy IBA.

Bird Fauna: Key Features

Tien Lang IBA is an important wintering and staging area for migratory shorebirds. The site regularly supports small but significant populations of two globally threatened species: Black-faced Spoonbill *Platalea minor* and Saunders's Gull *Larus saundersi*. In addition, the site supports significant concentrations of egrets, herons and shorebirds. Most notably, the site supports over 1% of the biogeographic population of Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*. During a survey of the site in April 1996, large numbers of passage migrants were observed, including over 50,000 Barn Swallows *Hirundo rustica* and Sand Martins *Riparia riparia*, and over 1,600 Black Bazas *Aviceda leuphotes*¹.

Species	IBA Criteria	Global Threat Status	Other IBAs	Notes
Black-faced Spoonbill <i>Platalea minor</i>	A1, A4i	EN	8	The species is a regular winter visitor in small numbers, with the biggest single count being 16 birds in March 1996 ² .
Saunders's Gull <i>Larus saundersi</i>	A1, A4i	VU	5	A single bird was observed in February 1995 ² . A maximum count of 30 birds was made between February and April 1996 ¹ .
Black-headed Ibis <i>Threskiornis melanocephalus</i>	A1	NT	8	Eight adults were observed feeding on a mudflat in the Van Uc estuary in March 1994 ³ .
Spotted Redshank <i>Tringa erythropus</i>	A4i		2	A count of 394 birds was made in April 1996 ¹ .

Biome Restricted Species: The site does not qualify under criterion A3. See Appendix 4 for details.

Secondary Criteria

The site does not qualify under any secondary criterion.

Threats to Biodiversity

The biggest threat to the old-growth mangrove at the site is enclosure within aquacultural ponds and selective cutting for fuel. In addition, the intertidal mudflats, which are the most important habitat for migratory waterbirds, are threatened by afforestation with mangrove. An additional threat to biodiversity at the site is hunting with guns and mist-nets. More than 500 m of mist-nets were observed during a survey in 1996¹.

Threat	Severity
Afforestation	• • •
Aquaculture / fisheries	• • •
Disturbance to birds	• •
Hunting	• •
Selective logging / cutting	• •

Conservation Actions

- In 1996, BirdLife International and the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute proposed that Tien Lang IBA should be conferred protected area status¹. To date, however, this has not taken place.

Recommendations

- Tien Lang meets the criteria for designation as a site of international importance for wetland conservation under the Ramsar Convention, and should, therefore, be designated as a Ramsar site.
- There should be no further aquacultural development, afforestation or logging of old-growth mangrove at the site¹.
- Measures should be implemented to control hunting at the site¹.
- A feasibility study for the establishment of a protected area at the site should be carried out.

References

1. Pedersen, A. and Nguyen Huy Thang (1996) *The conservation of key coastal wetland sites in the Red River Delta*. Hanoi: BirdLife International Vietnam Programme.
2. Eames, J. C. and Tordoff, A. W. (in prep) Recent records and a conservation status review of some threatened and near-threatened bird species in Vietnam.
3. Pedersen, A., Nielsen, S., Le Dien Thuy and Le Trong Trai (1998) The status and conservation of threatened and near-threatened species of birds in the Red River Delta, Vietnam. *Bird Conservation International* 8: 31-51.

An Hai

Criteria: A1

Province(s): Hai Phong
PA Status: None

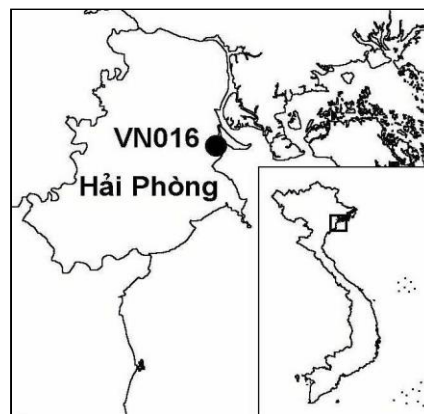
Latitude: 20°49'N
Longitude: 106°45'E
Area: 5,000 ha
Altitude Range: 0-2 m asl

EBA / SA:

None

Priority Landscape:

None

**General Description**

The IBA comprises the coastal zone of An Hai district, in the Red River Delta. The coastline of An Hai district stretches for 9 km between the Lach Tray estuary in the south and the Cam estuary in the north. The intertidal area in the Cam estuary is very narrow and deep but there is a wider intertidal area in the Lach Tray estuary. The intervening coastline is fringed by a narrow belt of mangrove. In the mouth of the Cam river, there are two islands, Dinh Vu and Vu Yen, dominated by aquacultural ponds, many of which contain reedbeds¹.

Bird Fauna: Key Features

An Hai IBA has been the focus of little ornithological survey to date. However, the site is believed to be important for a number of migratory waterbirds. Most significantly, the intertidal mudflats at the site appear to be an important wintering area for gulls, including Common Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*, Heuglin's Gull *L. heuglini*, and the globally threatened Saunders's Gull *L. saundersi*. Also, during a survey in 1996, a roost of 1,400 shorebirds was observed in the intertidal zone¹.

Species	IBA Criteria	Global Threat Status	Other IBAs	Notes
†Black-faced Spoonbill <i>Platalea minor</i>	A1	EN	8	A single bird was observed in the Lach Tray estuary in 1996 ¹ . The site probably does not regularly support a significant population.
Saunders's Gull <i>Larus saundersi</i>	A1	VU	5	Seventeen birds were observed in the Lach Tray estuary in 1996 ¹ .

Notes: † = not confirmed to regularly occur in significant numbers.

Biome Restricted Species: The site does not qualify under criterion A3. See Appendix 4 for details.

Secondary Criteria

The site does not qualify under any secondary criterion.

Threats to Biodiversity

One major threat to biodiversity at An Hai is afforestation of intertidal mudflats with mangrove, leading to the loss of the key habitat for migratory waterbirds. Other major threats include hunting and disturbance to birds. During a survey in 1996, collection of mangrove crab in the intertidal area and hunting with shotguns were both observed¹. In 1996, the district people's committee reported plans to build an industrial harbour on Dinh Vu island; it is not known whether these plans have been implemented.

Threat	Severity
Afforestation	• • •
Aquaculture / fisheries	• •
Disturbance to birds	• •
Hunting	• •
Industrial / urban development	• •

Conservation Actions

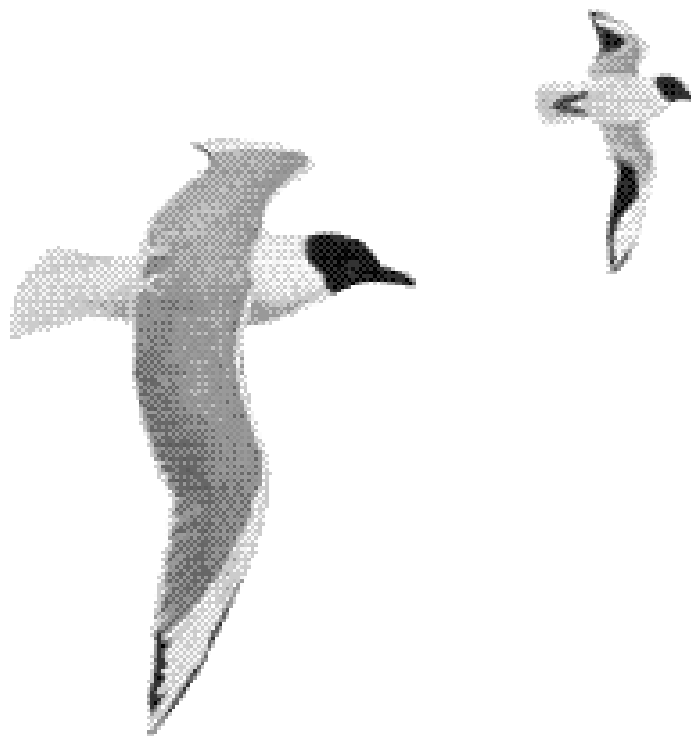
- To date, the site has not been the focus of any conservation action.

Recommendations

- Measures should be undertaken to raise awareness among local communities of the need for sustainable use of natural resources¹.
- Effective measures to control hunting at the site should be introduced.
- There should be no further afforestation of intertidal mudflats with mangrove.

References

1. Pedersen, A. and Nguyen Huy Thang (1996) *The conservation of key coastal wetland sites in the Red River Delta*. Hanoi: BirdLife International Vietnam Programme.



Saunders's Gull *Larus saundersi*

Ban Bung

Criteria: A1 & A3

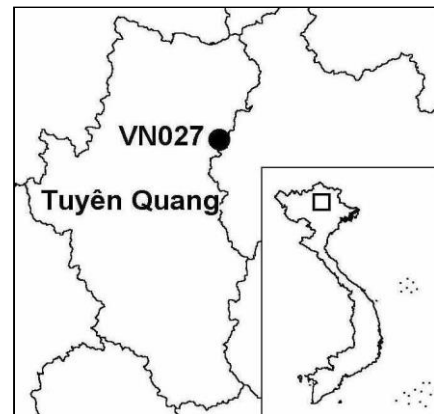
Province(s): Tuyen Quang
PA Status: None
Latitude: 22°19'N
Longitude: 105°28'E
Area: 15,000 ha
Altitude Range: 300-980 m asl

EBA / SA:

None

Priority Landscape:

None

**General Description**

The IBA comprises the Ban Bung sector of Na Hang proposed nature reserve. The topography of the IBA is dominated by limestone karst formations, which support limestone forest. There are smaller areas of non-calcareous substrates within the IBA, which support lowland evergreen forest and lower montane evergreen forest. Ban Bung IBA is notable as one of the few remaining sites in Vietnam to support a viable population of the globally critically endangered Tonkin Snub-nosed Monkey *Rhinopithecus avunculus*, a species endemic to northern Vietnam^{1,2,3}.

Bird Fauna: Key Features

Ban Bung IBA is known to support populations of three globally near-threatened species: Chestnut-necklaced Partridge *Arborophila charltonii*, Red-collared Woodpecker *Picus rabieri* and Brown Hornbill *Anorrhinus tickelli*. However, the most significant feature of the avifauna of the site is the high number of biome-restricted species. In particular, Ban Bung supports a number of biome-restricted species that are found at few other sites in Vietnam, including Eared Pitta *Pitta phayrei*, Grey-winged Blackbird *Turdus boulboul*, Slaty-blue Flycatcher *Ficedula tricolor*, Greater Rufous-headed Parrotbill *Paradoxornis ruficeps* and Spot-winged Grosbeak *Mycerobas melanozanthos*. In addition, Ban Bung may support the globally endangered White-eared Night Heron *Gorsachius magnificus*, which is known from the contiguous Ban Thi-Xuan Lac IBA. If the occurrence of this species was confirmed, Ban Bung IBA would qualify for inclusion within the South-east China Mountains Endemic Bird Area.

Species	IBA Criteria	Global Threat Status	Other IBAs	Notes
Chestnut-necklaced Partridge <i>Arborophila charltonii</i>	A1	NT	7	The species was recorded between January and March 1996 ² .
Red-collared Woodpecker <i>Picus rabieri</i>	A1, A3	NT	11	A total of nine birds were observed between January and March 1996 ² .
Brown Hornbill <i>Anorrhinus tickelli</i>	A1, A3	NT	16	The species was recorded between January and March 1996 ² .

Biome Restricted Species: The site qualifies under criterion A3 because it supports 32 species restricted to the Sino-Himalayan Subtropical Forests (Biome 08) and 13 species restricted to the Indochinese Tropical Moist Forests (Biome 09). See Appendix 4 for details.

Secondary Criteria

Species	Status	Species	Status
Assamese Macaque <i>Macaca assamensis</i> ³	VU	Keeled Box Turtle <i>Pyxidea mouhotii</i> ³	EN
Stump-tailed Macaque <i>Macaca arctoides</i> ³	VU	<i>Podocarpus neriifolius</i> ²	DD
[Francois's Langur <i>Trachypithecus francoisi francoisi</i>] ³	VU	Southern Serow <i>Naemorhedus sumatraensis</i> ^{2,3}	VU
Tonkin Snub-nosed Monkey <i>Rhinopithecus avunculus</i> ³	CR		

Notes: [] = unconfirmed record.

Threats to Biodiversity

One of the main threats to biodiversity at Ban Bung IBA is hunting, which is particularly severe in the case of Tonkin Snub-nosed Monkey, which has a small population and is targeted due to its perceived medicinal properties. Other threats are over-exploitation of timber and NTFPs, and clearance of forest for shifting cultivation.

The major threat to biodiversity at Ban Bung IBA is the planned construction of a hydroelectric dam on the Gam river, which forms the western boundary of the IBA. As well as inundating parts of the IBA, this dam, and associated access roads, would lead to increased human pressure on forest resources due to improved access to remote forest areas, and increased human population in the surrounding area. Potentially, the construction of the dam may lead to conversion of forest to agricultural land, if existing agricultural land is inundated⁴.

Threat	Severity
Construction of dykes / dams	• • •
Extraction mining	•
Hunting	• • •
Infrastructure development	• •
Selective logging / cutting	• •
Unsustainable exploitation of NTFPs	• •

Conservation Actions

- Tuyen Quang Provincial People's Committee approved the establishment of Na Hang Nature Reserve, which includes the IBA, in 1994 and, subsequently, a management board was established. To date, however, Na Hang Nature Reserve has not been decreed by the government of Vietnam¹.
- Since 1997, Allwetter Zoo and the Zoological Society for the Conservation of Species and Populations have been implementing a project entitled the *Tonkin Snub-nosed Monkey Conservation Project*, which has established community-based patrol groups to control hunting of this species¹.
- In 1998, Fauna and Flora International implemented a project entitled the *Na Hang Rainforest Conservation Project*, with the primary objective of strengthening the management of Na Hang proposed nature reserve³.
- Na Hang proposed nature reserve is one of the focal sites of a full-sized GEF project entitled *Creating Protected Areas for Resource Conservation using Landscape Ecology (PARC) Project*, which began implementation in 1999¹.

Recommendations

- Na Hang should be decreed as a protected area by the government of Vietnam.
- Enforcement of protected area management regulations, particularly controls on hunting and unsustainable exploitation of forest products, should be strengthened.
- An international quality Environmental Impact Assessment for the planned hydroelectric dam should be conducted, and appropriate mitigation measures should be introduced. These may include selecting an alternative location for the dam, limiting the height of the dam, or controlling forest clearance and illegal exploitation of natural resources during and after dam construction.

References

1. BirdLife International and the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute (2001) *Sourcebook of existing and proposed protected areas in Vietnam*. Hanoi: BirdLife International Vietnam Programme and the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute.
2. Hill, M. and Kemp, N. (1996) *Biological survey of Na Hang Nature Reserve, Tuyen Quang province, Vietnam: part 1, Ban Bung sector*. London: Society for Environmental Exploration.
3. Boonratana, R. (1998) *Na Hang rainforest conservation project*. Hanoi: Fauna & Flora International Indochina Programme.
4. McNab, A., Vo Tri Chung and Nguyen Huu Hong (2000) *River Gam dam preliminary environmental impact assessment*. Hanoi: Scott Wilson, Asia-Pacific Ltd.



Red-collared Woodpecker *Picus rabieri*

Sinh Long

Criteria: A3

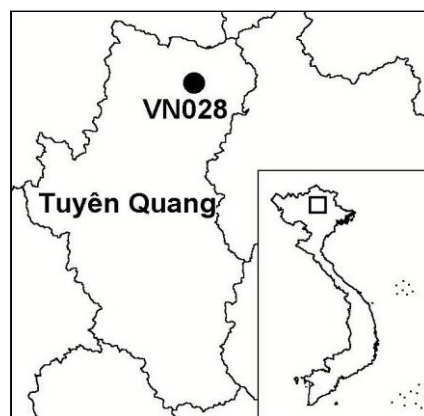
Province(s): Tuyen Quang
PA Status: None
Latitude: 22°30'N
Longitude: 105°24'E
Area: 10,000 ha
Altitude Range: 450-1,475 m asl

EBA / SA:

None

Priority Landscape:

None

**General Description**

Sinh Long IBA is situated within the Na Hang/Ba Be Forest Complex in northern Vietnam. The topography of the site is dominated by a mountain ridge. This ridge supports fragmented limestone forest along the ridge top, secondary lower montane evergreen forest on the slopes, and shifting cultivation on the lower slopes and in valley bottoms¹. Sinh Long IBA is contiguous with the Tat Ke sector of Na Hang proposed nature reserve.

Bird Fauna: Key Features

The avifauna of Sinh Long is typical of lower montane evergreen forest in northern Vietnam. While Sinh Long is not known to support any globally threatened or near-threatened species, the site qualifies as an IBA because it supports a large number of biome-restricted species. Most significantly, Sinh Long supports a number of species found at few other sites in Vietnam, including Collared Treepie *Dendrocitta frontalis*, Black-breasted Thrush *Turdus dissimilis*, Limestone Wren Babbler *Napothera crispifrons*, Lesser Rufous-headed Parrotbill *Paradoxornis atrosuperciliaris* and Greater Rufous-headed Parrotbill *P. ruficeps*.

Biome Restricted Species: The site qualifies under criterion A3 because it supports 39 species restricted to the Sino-Himalayan Subtropical Forests (Biome 10) and 10 species restricted to the Indochinese Tropical Moist Forests (Biome 09). See Appendix 4 for details.

Secondary Criteria

Species	Status	Species	Status
[Rhesus Macaque <i>Macaca mulatta</i>] ¹	NT	[Big-headed Turtle <i>Platysternon megacephalum</i>] ¹	EN
[Stump-tailed Macaque <i>Macaca arctoides</i>] ¹	VU	[Black-breasted Leaf Turtle <i>Geoemyda spengleri</i>] ¹	EN
[Francois's Langur <i>Trachypithecus francoisi francoisi</i>] ¹	VU	[Keeled Box Turtle <i>Pyxidea mouhotii</i>] ¹	EN
		[Southern Serow <i>Naemorhedus sumatraensis</i>] ¹	VU

Notes: [] = unconfirmed record.

Threats to Biodiversity

Currently, the major threats to biodiversity at Sinh Long IBA are clearance of forest, hunting, over-exploitation of NTFPs, timber extraction and isolation from nearby forest areas. Clearance of forest for agriculture, has already led to the loss of forest at low elevations at the site, and is a potentially severe threat in the future if the human population in surrounding areas increases as a result of natural population growth or settlement of migrants. Wildlife populations in the IBA are under intense pressure from hunting, which is conducted both for domestic consumption and to supply the wildlife trade. Timber and many NTFPs are currently being over-exploited by local communities, both for domestic use and to meet commercial demand from traders. Finally, isolation from nearby forest areas as a result of clearance of intervening forest areas is a potential threat¹.

Threat	Severity
Agricultural intensification / expansion	● ●
Hunting	● ● ●
Selective logging / cutting	● ●
Unsustainable exploitation of NTFPs	● ●

Conservation Actions

- None to date.

Recommendations

- Sinh Long IBA should be incorporated within the Tat Ke sector of Na Hang proposed nature reserve.
- Forest protection activities should be initiated at the IBA to reduce current levels of forest clearance, wildlife hunting and over-exploitation of forest products at the site.

References

1. Le Trong Trai, Eames, J. C., Kuznetsov, A. N., Nguyen Van Sang, Bui Xuan Puong and Monastyrskii, A. L. (2001) *A biodiversity survey of the Dong Phuc, Ban Thi-Xuan Lac and Sinh Long areas, Tuyen Quang and Bac Kan provinces, Vietnam*. Unpublished report to the Vietnam PARC Project, Na Hang/Ba Be Component.



Silver Pheasant *Lophura nycthemera*

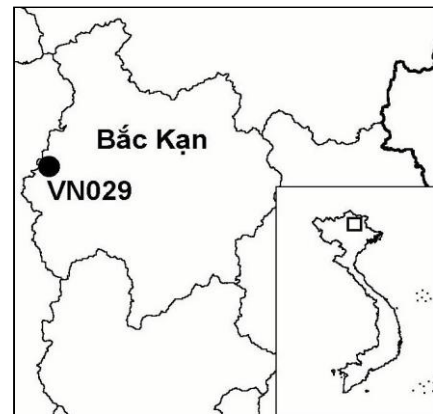
Ban Thi-Xuan Lac

Criteria: A1, A2, A3 & A4i

Province(s): Bac Kan
PA Status: None

Latitude: 22°18'N
Longitude: 105°31'E
Area: 2,200 ha
Altitude Range: 650-1,159 m asl

EBA / SA:
 South-east Chinese Mountains EBA
Priority Landscape:
 None



General Description

Ban Thi-Xuan Lac (BTXL) IBA is situated within the Na Hang/Ba Be Forest Complex in northern Vietnam. The topography of the IBA is characterised by limestone karst formations, interspersed with flat valleys containing fertile soil suitable for agriculture. As a result, the primary vegetation has been almost totally cleared from the flat valleys. However, the steep limestone karst slopes, which are unsuitable for agriculture, still support extensive areas of closed canopy forest¹. To the west, BTXL IBA is contiguous with Ban Bung IBA.

Bird Fauna: Key Features

BTXL is the only site in Vietnam from where there are confirmed records of White-eared Night Heron *Gorsachius magnificus*. These records reveal that BTXL should be included within the South-east China Mountains Endemic Bird Area (EBA). To date, however, there is no evidence to indicate that any of the other four restricted-range species that occur in this EBA (White-necklaced Partridge *Arborophila gingica*, Cabot's Tragopan *Tragopan caboti*, Elliot's Pheasant *Symaticus ellioti* and Brown-chested Jungle Flycatcher *Rhinomyias brunneata*) also occur in Vietnam¹. In addition to White-eared Night Heron, the IBA also supports a number of biome-restricted species that are known from few other sites in Vietnam, these include Eared Pitta *Pitta phayrei*, Collared Treepie *Dendrocitta frontalis*, Purple Cochoa *Cochoa purpurea*, Limestone Wren Babbler *Napothera crispifrons* and Greater Rufous-headed Parrotbill *Paradoxornis ruficeps*.

Species	IBA Criteria	Global Threat Status	Other IBAs	Notes
White-eared Night Heron <i>Gorsachius magnificus</i>	A1, A2, A4i	EN	0	During April and May 2001, single birds, probably the same individual, were observed on two occasions roosting in a tall tree next to a stream in an area of limestone karst ¹ .

Biome Restricted Species: The site qualifies under criterion A3 because it supports 29 species restricted to the Sino-Himalayan Subtropical Forests (Biome 08) and 14 species restricted to the Indochinese Tropical Moist Forests (Biome 09). See Appendix 4 for details.

Secondary Criteria

Species	Status	Species	Status
[Northern Slow Loris <i>Nycticebus bengalensis</i>] ¹	DD	[Big-headed Turtle <i>Platysternon megacephalum</i>] ¹	EN
[Rhesus Macaque <i>Macaca mulatta</i>] ¹	NT	Black-breasted Leaf Turtle <i>Geoemyda spengleri</i> ¹	EN
[Stump-tailed Macaque <i>Macaca arctoides</i>] ¹	VU	[Keeled Box Turtle <i>Pyxidea mouhotii</i>] ¹	EN
[Francois's Langur <i>Trachypithecus francoisi francoisi</i>] ¹	VU	[Amenotaxus <i>argotaenia</i> var. <i>argotaenia</i>] ¹	VU
		[Southern Serow <i>Naemorhedus sumatraensis</i>] ¹	VU

Notes: [] = unconfirmed record.

Threats to Biodiversity

Currently, the major threats to biodiversity at BTXL are clearance of forest for agriculture, hunting, over-exploitation of NTFPs, timber extraction, and isolation from nearby forest areas. Clearance of forest for agriculture, is a potential threat if there is an increase in the human population in surrounding areas in the future. However, the potential impact of this threat is limited by the unsuitability of the limestone karst terrain for agriculture. A more serious threat is habitat degradation as a result of over-exploitation of timber and NTFPs, which is occurring at relatively high levels in response to commercial demand. In addition, wildlife populations in the IBA are under intense pressure from hunting, which is taking place both for domestic consumption and to supply the wildlife trade. Finally, isolation from nearby forest areas as a result of clearance of intervening forest areas is a potential threat¹.

Threat	Severity
Agricultural intensification / expansion	•
Hunting	• • •
Selective logging / cutting	• • •
Unsustainable exploitation of NTFPs	• •

Conservation Actions

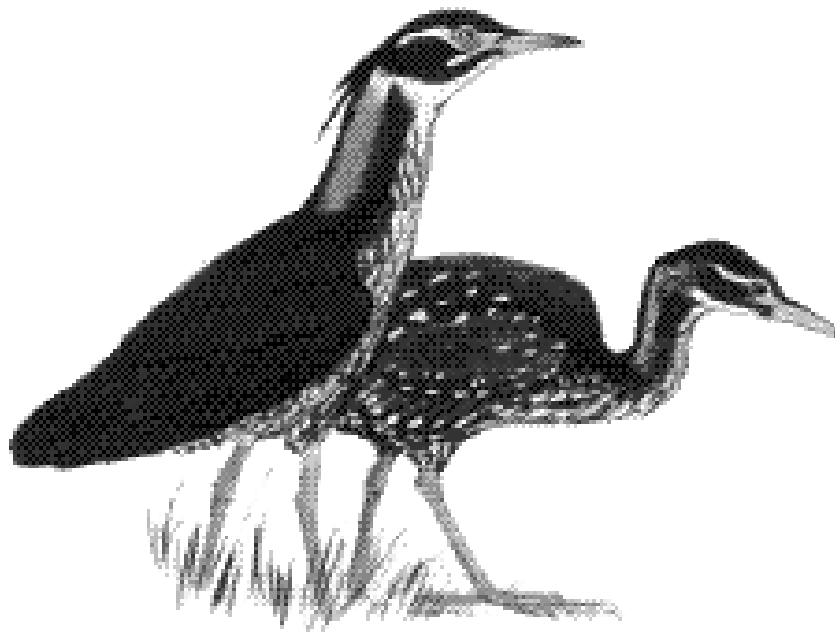
- None to date.

Recommendations

- BTXL should be afforded protected area status, either as part of Ba Be National Park or Na Hang proposed nature reserve, or as a separate nature reserve.
- Forest protection activities should be initiated at the IBA to reduce current levels of forest clearance, wildlife hunting and over-exploitation of forest products at the site. Particular attention should be given to forested streams and rivers, which are the key habitats for White-eared Night Heron.
- Further studies should be conducted to assess the status and distribution of White-eared Night Heron at the site.

References

1. Le Trong Trai, Eames, J. C., Kuznetsov, A. N., Nguyen Van Sang, Bui Xuan Puong and Monastyrskii, A. L. (2001) *A biodiversity survey of the Dong Phuc, Ban Thi-Xuan Lac and Sinh Long areas, Tuyen Quang and Bac Kan provinces, Vietnam*. Unpublished report to the Vietnam PARC Project, Na Hang/Ba Be Component.



White-eared Night Heron *Gorsachius magnificus*

Tam Dao

Criteria: A1 & A3

Province(s): Vinh Phuc, Thai Nguyen and Tuyen Quang

PA Status: National Park

Latitude: 21°32'N

Longitude: 105°34'E

Area: 36,883 ha

Altitude Range: 100-1,592 m asl

EBA / SA:

None

Priority Landscape:

None



General Description

The IBA comprises Tam Dao National Park in northern Vietnam. The topography of Tam Dao IBA is dominated by a long mountain ridge, which rises abruptly from the plain of the Red River Delta. Originally, Tam Dao supported a large area of lower montane evergreen forest, with lowland evergreen forest at lower elevations, and elfin forest on the highest peaks¹. However, due to a long history of over-exploitation of forest resources, clearance of forest for agriculture and forest fire, the lowland evergreen forest has been largely cleared and replaced by a range of secondary vegetation types, including large areas of pine plantation.

Bird Fauna: Key Features

Tam Dao IBA is one of the few sites in Vietnam from where there have been recent records of Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca* and Fairy Pitta *Pitta nympha*, two globally threatened species. However, both species are presumably rare passage migrants through the IBA, and it is unlikely that the site regularly supports a significant population of either. From an ornithological perspective, the greatest significance of Tam Dao IBA is that it supports a large number of biome-restricted species. In particular, the site supports a number of biome-restricted species that are known from few other sites in Vietnam, such as Blue-naped Pitta *Pitta nipalensis*, Purple Cochoa *Cochoa purpurea*, Chestnut-headed Tesia *Tesia castaneocoronata*, Pale-footed Bush Warbler *Cettia pallidipes* and Greater Rufous-headed Parrotbill *Paradoxornis ruficeps*.

Species	IBA Criteria	Global Threat Status	Other IBAs	Notes
†Imperial Eagle <i>Aquila heliaca</i>	A1	VU	2	A juvenile was observed in flight in December 1993 ² . It is unlikely that the site regularly supports a significant population.
†Fairy Pitta <i>Pitta nympha</i>	A1, A3	VU	2	One live individual, which was reportedly captured within the IBA, was found on a market stall in Tam Dao town in May 1997 ² . It is unlikely that the site regularly supports a significant population.

Notes: † = not confirmed to regularly occur in significant numbers.

Biome Restricted Species: The site qualifies under criterion A3 because it supports 39 species restricted to the Sino-Himalayan Subtropical Forests (Biome 08) and nine species restricted to the Indochinese Tropical Moist Forests (Biome 09). See Appendix 4 for details.

Secondary Criteria

Species	Status	Species	Status
[<i>Fokienia hodginsii</i>] ³	NT	<i>Amentotaxus argotaenia</i> var. <i>argotaenia</i> ⁴	VU

Notes: [] = unconfirmed record.

Threats to Biodiversity

There exist a number of severe threats to biodiversity at Tam Dao IBA. Most significantly, due to weak enforcement of national park management regulations, exploitation of forest resources is widespread and unsustainable. Unsustainable exploitation of forest products takes the form of hunting, collection of medicinal plants, insects and orchids, firewood collection and selective timber extraction. This problem is compounded by the development of Tam Dao as a tourism destination, thereby creating a large market for forest products, including stone, timber and other construction materials for tourist infrastructure. Wildlife is openly sold at markets and restaurants within the national park. Another major threat to biodiversity is habitat loss as a result of forest fire. Some forest fires occur accidentally, a problem exacerbated by the pronounced dry season at Tam Dao, which makes the forest susceptible to fire. Other fires are set deliberately by local people, for instance to clear forest for tea plantations¹.

Threat	Severity
Afforestation	•
Agricultural intensification / expansion	• •
Fire	• •
Hunting	• • •
Recreation / tourism	• •
Selective logging / cutting	• •
Unsustainable exploitation of NTFPs	• • •

Conservation Actions

- In 1977, Tam Dao was decreed as a nature reserve by the government of Vietnam¹.
- In 1996, Tam Dao was upgraded to national park status, and a management board was established¹.
- An integrated conservation and development project, which will focus on buffer zone management at the national park, is currently being developed by GTZ¹.

Recommendations

- Protected area management regulations should be effectively enforced, particularly controls on exploitation of and trade in forest products.
- Tourism should be developed in a sustainable manner, so that negative environmental impacts are minimised and potential benefits for the management of the biodiversity of the national park are maximised.
- Measures to reduce the risk of fires during the dry season should be introduced, including extension activities among local communities.

References

1. BirdLife International and the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute (2001) *Sourcebook of existing and proposed protected areas in Vietnam*. Hanoi: BirdLife International Vietnam Programme and the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute.
2. Eames, J. C. and Tordoff, A. W. (in prep.) Recent records and a conservation status review of some threatened and near-threatened bird species in Vietnam.
3. Anon. (1993) [*Investment plan for Tam Dao National Park*]. Hanoi: Forest Inventory and Planning Institute. (In Vietnamese.)
4. Nguyen Tien Hiep and Vidal, J. E. (1996) *Flore du Cambodge du Laos et du Vietnam. Vol. 28: Gymnospermae*. Paris: Museum National D'Histoire Naturelle. (In French.)



Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca*

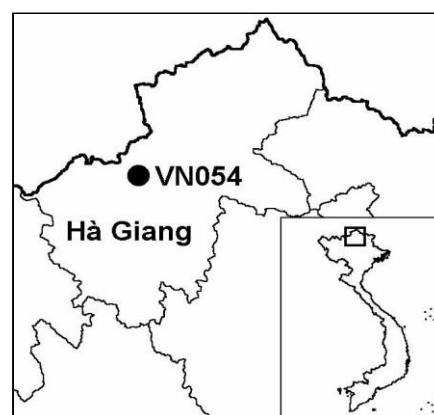
Tay Con Linh

Criteria: A1, A2 & A3

Province(s): Ha Giang
PA Status: None

Latitude: 22°46'N
Longitude: 104°49'E
Area: 40,344 ha
Altitude Range: 100-2,616 m asl

EBA / SA:
 None
Priority Landscape:
 None



General Description

The IBA is centred on Mount Tay Con Linh, which, at 2,616 m asl, is the highest mountain in north-eastern Vietnam. The northern flank of the mountain is included within Tay Con Linh I proposed nature reserve, while the southern flank is included within Tay Con Linh II proposed nature reserve. The topography of the IBA is steep and mountainous. The natural habitat types at the IBA are lowland evergreen forest, lower montane evergreen forest and upper montane evergreen forest, although areas at low elevations have largely been cleared for agriculture, and all remaining forest below 1,200 m asl is heavily disturbed^{1,2}.

Bird Fauna: Key Features

Tay Con Linh IBA supports a rich montane avifauna, including a large number of species restricted to the Sino-Himalayan Subtropical Forests Biome. Tay Con Linh is one of only four IBAs in Vietnam known to support a population of the globally vulnerable Beautiful Nuthatch *Sitta formosa*. In addition, during a survey in May 2000, an undescribed taxon of Short-tailed Scimitar Babbler *Jabouilleia danjoui* was collected at the IBA². This is the most northerly record of this restricted-range species.

Species	IBA Criteria	Global Threat Status	Other IBAs	Notes
Beautiful Nuthatch <i>Sitta formosa</i>	A1, A3	VU	3	Pairs, possibly the same birds, were observed at 1,500 m asl on two occasions in May 2000 ² .
Short-tailed Scimitar Babbler <i>Jabouilleia danjoui</i>	A1, A2	NT	17	A single specimen was collected in dense vegetation at 1,400 m asl in May 2000 ² .

Notes: [] = unconfirmed record.

Biome Restricted Species: The site qualifies under criterion A3 because it supports 35 species restricted to the Sino-Himalayan Subtropical Forests (Biome 08). See Appendix 4 for details.

Secondary Criteria

Species	Status	Species	Status
[<i>Cupressus torulosa</i>] ^{3,4}	NT	<i>Fokienia hodginsii</i> ⁵	NT

Threats to Biodiversity

Around 11,600 people, belonging to the Dao, Tay, Hmong, Hoa and Co Lao ethnic minorities, live inside Tay Con Linh IBA. A significant area of forest has already been cleared for agriculture, both wet rice and shifting cultivation. Other major threats to biodiversity at the IBA include hunting and over-exploitation of forest products.

Threat	Severity
Agricultural intensification / expansion	● ●
Fire	●
Hunting	● ● ●
Selective logging / cutting	● ●
Unsustainable exploitation of NTFPs	● ●

Interviews with local people indicate that there have been severe declines in mammal populations and diversity in the last 30 years. Consequently, birds appear to be under strong hunting pressure. Some species particularly sensitive to hunting pressure, such as hornbills, parakeets and pheasants, may already have been eradicated from the IBA².

Conservation Actions

- Investment plans for Tay Con Linh I and Tay Con Linh II were prepared in July 1994, and proposed establishing two separate nature reserves¹. After the approval of these investment plans by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and Ha Giang Provincial People's Committee, two separate management boards were established in November 1994¹.

Recommendations

- The two nature reserve management boards established at the provincial level should be combined, and Tay Con Linh should be decreed as a nature reserve by the government of Vietnam.
- Enforcement of forest management regulations should be strengthened, particularly controls on forest clearance and illegal logging.
- National social forestry programmes should be extended, in order to increase the involvement of local communities in forest protection and provide an alternative source of forest products.
- An integrated programme of anti-hunting activities should be initiated, including conservation awareness raising, controls on wildlife trade, and community-based anti-hunting patrols.

References

1. BirdLife International and the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute (2001) *Sourcebook of existing and proposed protected areas in Vietnam*. Hanoi: BirdLife International Vietnam Programme and the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute.
2. Vogel, C. J., Sweet, P. R., Le Manh Hung and Hurley, M. M. (submitted, Forktail) Ornithological records from Ha Giang province, Vietnam.
3. Anon. (1994a) [*Investment plan for Tay Con Linh I Nature Reserve*]. Hanoi: Forest Inventory and Planning Institute. (In Vietnamese.)
4. Anon. (1994b) [*Investment plan for Tay Con Linh II Nature Reserve*]. Hanoi: Forest Inventory and Planning Institute. (In Vietnamese.)
5. Nguyen Tien Hiep and Vidal, J. E (1996) *Flore du Cambodge du Laos et du Vietnam, vol. 28: Gymnospermae*. Paris: Museum National D'Histoire Naturelle. (In French.)



Beautiful Nuthatch *Sitta formosa*

Du Gia

Criteria: A1 & A3

Province(s): Ha Giang
PA Status: None

Latitude: 22°54'N
Longitude: 105°12'E
Area: 24,293 ha
Altitude Range: 400-2,275 m asl

EBA / SA:
None
Priority Landscape:
None



General Description

The IBA comprises Du Gia proposed nature reserve in north-eastern Vietnam. The topography of the IBA is steep and mountainous, and dominated by Mount Pu Tha Ca (2,275 m asl) in the centre of the IBA and Mount Muong Cha (1,773 m asl) in the south-east. The broad valleys at the base of Mount Phu Tha Ca, at elevations between 400 and 600 m asl, are settled by members of the Hmong ethnic group, and are cultivated, mainly with maize. Above the cultivated areas, between 600 and 900 m asl, the forest has been entirely cleared and replaced by secondary vegetation. Lower montane evergreen forest is distributed at elevations between 900 and 1,800 m asl, although, below 1,500 m asl, most of the forest has been degraded by selective timber extraction. Upper montane evergreen forest is distributed at elevations above 1,800 m asl¹. Du Gia IBA is notable because it is one of the few sites in the world to support a population of Tonkin Snub-nosed Monkey *Rhinopithecus avunculus*, a critically endangered species, which is endemic to northern Vietnam².

Bird Fauna: Key Features

The bird community of Du Gia IBA is characteristic of montane evergreen forest in northern Vietnam. However, as surveys to date have concentrated on lower montane evergreen forest, the composition of the upper montane bird fauna remains largely unknown. The most frequently recorded species in lower montane evergreen forest include Golden-throated Barbet *Megalaima franklinii*, Red-headed Trogon *Harpactes erythrocephalus*, Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis*, Mountain Bulbul *Hypsipetes mcclllandii*, Blue-winged Minla *Minla cyanouroptera*, Grey-cheeked Fulvetta *Alcippe morrisonia*, Long-tailed Sibia *Heterophasia picoides*, Whiskered Yuhina *Yuhina flavicollis* and Black-throated Sunbird *Aethopyga saturata*. One of the most notable components of the bird fauna of Du Gia is Beautiful Nuthatch *Sitta formosa*, a globally vulnerable species that is known from only three other sites in Vietnam¹.

Species	IBA Criteria	Global Threat Status	Other IBAs	Notes
Beautiful Nuthatch <i>Sitta formosa</i>	A1, A3	VU	3	A single bird was observed at 1,400 m asl on Mount Pu Tha Ca in March 2000 ³ . A single bird was observed at c.1,100 m asl on Mount Muong Cha in April 2000 ³ . Single birds were observed in mixed species flocks at 1,600 and 1,850 m asl on Mount Phu Tha Ca in May 2002 ¹ .
Yellow-vented Warbler <i>Phylloscopus cantator</i>	A2		0	A single bird was observed at c.900 m asl on Mount Muong Cha in April 2000 ³ . There is no evidence that the species breeds at the site, and, therefore, the site probably does not qualify for inclusion within the Eastern Himalayas EBA.

Biome Restricted Species: The site qualifies under criterion A3 because it supports 35 species restricted to the Sino-Himalayan Subtropical Forests (Biome 08). See Appendix 4 for details.

Secondary Criteria

Species

Tonkin Snub-nosed Monkey
*Rhinopithecus avunculus*²

Status

CR

Species

[*Fokienia hodginsii*]⁴

Status

NT

Notes: [] = unconfirmed record.

Threats to Biodiversity

In the short term, the biggest threat to biodiversity at Du Gia IBA is hunting, which presents a particular threat to the population of Tonkin Snub-nosed Monkey. In the longer term, habitat degradation and loss are the biggest threats to bird conservation at the IBA. The major causes of habitat degradation and loss are clearance of forest for agriculture, fire, and over-exploitation of timber and NTFPs.

Threat	Severity
Agricultural intensification / expansion	• •
Fire	• •
Hunting	• • •
Selective logging / cutting	• •
Unsustainable exploitation of NTFPs	• •

Conservation Actions

- An investment plan for Du Gia was prepared in early 1994, and proposed establishing a 24,239 ha nature reserve⁵. After the approval of this investment plan by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and Ha Giang Provincial People's Committee, a management board was established in November 1994⁵.

Recommendations

- Du Gia should be decreed as a nature reserve by the government of Vietnam.
- The capacity of the nature reserve management board should be strengthened, through the provision of additional staff, training and funds¹.
- Strict controls should be placed on extraction of timber and NTFPs, especially from areas known to support Tonkin Snub-nosed Monkey.
- National social forestry programmes should be extended, in order to increase the involvement of local communities in forest protection and provide an alternative source of forest products.
- An integrated programme of anti-hunting activities should be initiated, including conservation awareness raising, controls on wildlife trade, and community-based anti-hunting patrols.
- Additional surveys should be conducted to assess the status and distribution key species at the site, in order to provide a basis for targeted conservation interventions.

References

1. Le Manh Hung, Tran Thieu Du and Vu Huu Trac (2002) *A rapid field survey of Xin Man and Yen Minh districts, Ha Giang Province, Vietnam*. Unpublished report to the BirdLife International Vietnam Programme and the Institute of Ecology and Biological Resources.
2. Le Khac Quyet, pers. comm.
3. Vogel, C. J., Sweet, P. R., Le Manh Hung and Hurley, M. M. (submitted, Forktail) Ornithological records from Ha Giang province, Vietnam.
4. Dinh Van Manh (1994) [*Investment plan for Du Gia Nature Reserve, Ha Giang province*]. Hanoi: Forest Inventory and Planning Institute. (In Vietnamese.)
5. BirdLife International and the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute (2001) *Sourcebook of existing and proposed protected areas in Vietnam*. Hanoi: BirdLife International Vietnam Programme and the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute.

Ha Nam

Criteria: A1 & A4i

Province(s): Quang Ninh
PA Status: None

Latitude: 20°52'N
Longitude: 106°49'E
Area: 5,000 ha
Altitude Range: 0-2 m asl

EBA / SA:

None

Priority Landscape:

None

**General Description**

The IBA is centred on Ha Nam island, which is situated at the mouth of the Bach Dang river, the northernmost estuary in the Red River Delta. Ha Nam island is linked to the mainland via a bridge, and is ringed by a sea dyke, within which the land use is dominated agriculture and habitation. Outside of the sea dyke, on the southern and western sides of the island, there are numerous shrimp ponds, many of which contain mangrove. The IBA comprises these shrimp ponds, together with areas of unenclosed mangrove and intertidal mudflats in the mouth of the Bach Dang river. The aquacultural ponds are currently under the management of a number of aquacultural enterprises¹.

Bird Fauna: Key Features

The avifauna of Ha Nam IBA is relatively little known, as there have only been two brief surveys of the site to date. However, small numbers of the globally endangered Black-faced Spoonbill *Platalea minor* were recorded on both occasions, indicating that the IBA may regularly support a significant population of this species, and the results of the surveys indicate that Ha Nam is an important wintering area for migratory waterbirds. For example, a count of 150 Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* made in January 2002 is the largest recent count of this nationally threatened species in Vietnam. In addition, the site supports nationally significant wintering populations of Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*, Eurasian Wigeon *A. penelope* and Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*¹.

Species	IBA Criteria	Global Threat Status	Other IBAs	Notes
Black-faced Spoonbill <i>Platalea minor</i>	A1, A4i	EN	8	Four juveniles were observed in a shrimp pond at the southern tip of Ha Nam island in December 2001. The following month, three juveniles were seen at the same site and the remains of a fourth were observed in the house of a local person ¹ .

Biome Restricted Species: The site does not qualify under criterion A3. See Appendix 4 for details.

Secondary Criteria

The site does not qualify under any secondary criterion.

Threats to Biodiversity

One of the major threats to biodiversity at Ha Nam IBA is hunting. Hunting with mist nets and taped calls is conducted for commercial purposes. In addition, people from outside of the district visit the site for sport hunting with guns. The former activity is a particular threat to migratory shorebirds, while the latter is a particular threat to ducks and other waterfowl. A second major threat to biodiversity is unsustainable aquacultural methods, which lead to die-back of mangrove within shrimp ponds, resulting in a loss of roosting habitat for migratory waterbirds. A third major threat is unsustainable fishing methods, such as electro-fishing

Threat	Severity
Aquaculture / fisheries	• •
Disturbance to birds	•
Hunting	• • •

and fishing with explosives, which may have negative impacts upon waterbird populations through disturbance and depletion of fish stocks¹.

Conservation Actions

- With the support of BirdLife International and Quang Ninh Provincial Department of Science, Technology and Environment, an IBA support group was established on Ha Nam island in August 2002. This support group brings together local stakeholders to discuss environmental problems at the IBA and identify solutions.
- In 2002, Yen Hung District People's Committee prepared local environmental management regulations, prohibiting hunting of birds and promoting sustainable aquacultural practices.

Recommendations

- Ha Nam meets the criteria for designation as a site of international importance for wetland conservation under the Ramsar Convention, and should, therefore, be designated as a Ramsar site.
- Measures are required to establish effective protection for the avifauna of the site, particularly during migration periods, and should include a strict prohibition on all forms of hunting and unsustainable fishing techniques¹.
- Measures should also be introduced to limit further expansion of aquaculture within mangrove areas and promote sustainable aquacultural practices¹.
- Activities should be implemented to raise awareness among all stakeholders of the biodiversity and socio-economic values of the IBA, and to generate a sense of responsibility for the conservation of the IBA among the local community¹.
- The IBA Support Group established in 2002 should be actively supported, as a means to increase the involvement of local stakeholders in environmental management.
- Further surveys are required to identify the key areas for migratory birds within the IBA, and to develop a better understanding of the impacts of human activities¹.

References

1. Le Manh Hung, Nguyen Duc Tu, Tordoff, A. W. and Vu Hong Phuong (2002) *A rapid bird survey of the coastal zone of Quang Ninh province, Vietnam*. Unpublished report to the BirdLife International Vietnam Programme and the Institute of Ecology and Biological Resources.



Black-faced Spoonbill *Platalea minor*

Tra Co

Criteria: A1

Province(s): Quang Ninh
PA Status: None

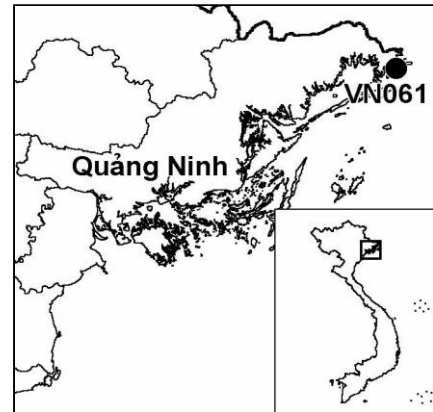
Latitude: 21°28'N
Longitude: 108°01'E
Area: 3,000 ha
Altitude Range: 0-2 m asl

EBA / SA:

None

Priority Landscape:

None



General Description

The IBA is centred on Tra Co island, which is situated off the coast of northern Vietnam, close to the international border with China. The island comprises a long, sandy beach, backed by a *Casuarina equisetifolia* plantation, and is linked to the mainland by a causeway. The north-eastern tip of Tra Co island, known as Mui Got Giay, consists of a sandy spit, behind which is a small area of mangrove. The south-western tip of Tra Co island, known as Mui Ngoc, is situated at the mouth of a small bay, which contains a significant area of intertidal mudflats. On the far side of the bay, in Van Ninh commune, the coastline is dominated by aquacultural ponds. In addition to the island, the bay and the coastline of Van Ninh commune, the IBA also comprises Bai Tuc Lam, an area of mangrove along the international border. Tra Co IBA is currently not under any protected area designation, and the island is being developed as a tourism site¹.

Bird Fauna: Key Features

Although there has only been a single, brief ornithological survey to date, the findings indicate that Tra Co is an important site for migratory bird species. The sandy spit on the northern tip of the island supports a high-tide wader roost, while the intertidal mudflats in the bay to the south of the island support wintering Saunders's Gulls *Larus saundersi*. In fact, Tra Co IBA is the first wintering site for this globally threatened species in Vietnam to have been identified outside of the coastal zone of the Red River Delta¹. In addition, the nationally threatened Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* has been recorded in the Bai Tuc Lam mangrove area, although security restrictions have prevented a detailed survey of this area to date¹. Furthermore, Tra Co is one of only two IBAs in Vietnam known to support Red-billed Starling *Sturnus sericeus*, a biome-restricted species.

Species	IBA Criteria	Global Threat Status	Other IBAs	Notes
Saunders's Gull <i>Larus saundersi</i>	A1	VU	5	An adult and five juveniles observed in an area of aquacultural ponds in Van Ninh commune, and two adults were observed on an intertidal mudflat between Tra Co island and Van Ninh commune in December 2001 ¹ .

Biome Restricted Species: The site does not qualify under criterion A3. See Appendix 4 for details.

Secondary Criteria

The site does not qualify under any secondary criterion.

Threats to Biodiversity

The biodiversity of Tra Co IBA is currently under severe threat from a number of sources. Mist netting, which has been observed on Tra Co island, represents a particular threat to migratory shorebirds. The development of tourism on the island is an additional threat, as it may result in loss of habitat and disturbance to birds. Also, unsustainable aquacultural practices have already resulted in the loss of mangrove from most aquaculture ponds within the IBA¹.

Perhaps the biggest potential threat to biodiversity at the IBA, however, is posed by plans to build a port and dredge the bay south-west of Mui Ngoc, in order to allow ferries to enter Mong Cai town. This planned development threatens to destroy the intertidal mudflats in the bay, which are the key feeding habitat for Saunders's Gull¹.

Threat	Severity
Aquaculture / fisheries	•
Disturbance to birds	• •
Dredging and canalization	• • •
Hunting	• •
Infrastructure development	• • •
Recreation / tourism	• •

Conservation Actions

- None to date.

Recommendations

- The northern tip of Tra Co island, around Mui Got Giay, should be designated as a local protected area and all forms of infrastructure development within the area should be strictly prohibited¹.
- Decisive measures are required to control mist netting at the IBA, particularly at Mui Got Giay, and should place special emphasis upon ensuring adequate protection for the avifauna of the site during bird migrations¹.
- Further expansion and development of intensive aquaculture should be strictly controlled at the site¹.
- Environmental considerations should be incorporated into any future plans for tourism and infrastructure development at the site¹.
- Further surveys are required to determine the importance of the Bai Tuc Lam area for migratory waterbirds, and, until such time as these are carried out, this area should be considered of potential importance for bird conservation and taken into account in any future development plans¹.
- Activities should be implemented to raise awareness among all stakeholders of the biodiversity and socio-economic values of the site, particularly among decision makers at the district and provincial levels¹.

References

1. Le Manh Hung, Nguyen Duc Tu, Tordoff, A. W. and Vu Hong Phuong (2002) *A rapid bird survey of the coastal zone of Quang Ninh province, Vietnam*. Unpublished report to the BirdLife International Vietnam Programme and the Institute of Ecology and Biological Resources.